Security Quickie 04-22-02, Password Protection

We use passwords everyday to access accounts at work. Most of us also need passwords to access stuff like e-mail lists, eBay and Pay Pal accounts, banking records, or tons of other online services. Whether we are at work or at home, it is important to protect our passwords, because in doing so we are protecting our identity and even our finances.

Item 12 of the ITD Operating Security Policy details how we are to protect our passwords as well as how to create them. We change passwords every 60 days, we don't repeat passwords, we don't store them online or write them down (with very few exceptions), and we don't share them. Following this policy really can help keep the State network safer.

But we can also use this policy as a guideline with regard to non-state issues as well. Use it as a 'best-practices' to follow on your home systems. Change your passwords regularly for the online services you use. Home systems and commercial organizations like eBay, banks, or credit card companies do occasionally get hacked or have their databases stolen, so protect your identity and finances by using good passwords and protecting those passwords with the same procedures you use at work. A little caution and prevention could save you the agony of rebuilding your online identity and financial credibility.